



Your New Baby

Photos/Notes Page

Your New Baby

Happy Birth Day

New parents have lots of questions. This book will help answer your questions. It has a guide for each visit to the doctor or nurse. For words you do not understand, use the glossary at the back of the book or ask your doctor or nurse. There are places in this book to write down things you want to remember or questions you want to ask.

Baby's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Time of Birth: _____ AM/PM

Weight: _____ pounds _____ ounces Length: _____ inches



photo

Your Amazing Newborn

When your baby is born, there is so much he can do!

A newborn may:

- See your face clearly when you hold him in your arms
- Look into your eyes
- Tell your voice from other voices

At birth, your baby enters a brand new world. He is aware of many changes. He sees, feels, smells, hears, and tastes things strongly. Usually, he is very awake for the first hour or two after birth. There are some things you can do during that time for your baby:

- Gently touch your baby—stroke or massage him and hold him next to your skin
- Make eye contact with him
- Talk softly to him while you look into his eyes
- Breastfeed him for the first time

Your baby already feels very connected to you. Take time to get to know each other and enjoy being together.

Your Baby's First Exam

During the first 24 hours, a doctor or nurse will do a physical exam. You can ask to watch. They will:

- Weigh and measure your baby
- Listen to your baby's heart
- Check your baby's body and reflexes
- Check for jaundice

Talking with the Doctor or Nurse

The doctor or nurse will talk with you about your baby. He or she will talk about feeding, caring for the belly button, car safety seats, and what position your baby should sleep in. This is a time to ask your questions. No question is silly or dumb. If you do not understand something, ask your doctor or nurse to explain it to you. Writing down your questions may help you remember. Your doctor or nurse will not know that you have a question unless you ask it. If there are possible problems that need follow-up, he or she will tell you about them.

At the exam, your doctor will also talk about giving your baby her first hepatitis B immunization. You will get a small blue book called the Massachusetts Lifetime Immunization Record. All of her immunizations will be recorded in it. Bring this record to every health care visit. It is very important. Your child will need it for going to child care, school, and camp.

Newborn Exam

Your doctor or nurse may talk about:

- How newborns sleep
- When and how to call the doctor or nurse
- How to tell if your baby is getting enough to eat
- Getting help at home
- Putting your baby to sleep on his back

Questions some parents ask:

- How many wet or soiled diapers should I expect over the next several days?
- Does my baby need water?
- Is it normal for my baby to lose weight?
- How often should I feed my baby?
- Who can help me with breastfeeding?

Your Questions:

Newborn Exam

Doctor's name: _____

Date of exam: ____/____/____

month day year

My child's age: _____ days

Birth weight: _____ pounds _____ ounces

Discharge weight: _____ pounds _____ ounces

Length: _____ inches

Head size: _____ inches

*Immunizations: _____

Things to remember:

Remember the first well-child visit in 1-2 weeks.

Date: _____ Time: _____

Doctor's name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

* Schedules may vary. Your doctor or nurse will make recommendations.

Newborn Screening

All babies are tested for signs of some possible health problems at the hospital. These tests are called screenings. Screenings check for problems that can be treated when found early. Ask your doctor for more information about any of these tests.

Newborn Hearing Screening

Your baby will be screened for signs of possible hearing problems. It is simple and does not hurt. If the screening shows that your baby might have a hearing problem, it means that your baby needs other tests. Your doctor will speak with you about these tests.

Very few babies are born with hearing loss. If your baby has a hearing problem, it is important to find out early. This way children can get the best care to prevent speech and learning problems later.

Newborn Screening Blood Test

Routine Newborn Screening: When your baby is about two days old, a few small drops of blood will be collected. This lets your baby be tested for ten treatable diseases.

Optional Newborn Screening: You will be asked whether you want your baby to be tested for twenty other treatable diseases. No extra blood is needed for this test.

If the routine or optional screenings show that your baby has signs of a possible disease, your baby's doctor will call you.

How Do I Get Health Care for My Child?

Choosing a Doctor or Nurse

Many people choose a doctor or nurse for their baby before she is born. If you have not already done that, now is the time. You can get help from the hospital, your own doctor, your local health center, or your adoption agency. Your baby will need her first check-up when she is 1-2 weeks old.

Your doctor or nurse is your partner in keeping your child healthy. It is important to be able to:

- Talk comfortably together
- Get to appointments easily
- Reach your doctor or nurse by telephone
- Make decisions together

Paying for Health Care

Sometimes your choice of doctor or nurse is limited by the health insurance plan. Well-child visits are usually covered by your health insurance plan. If you have insurance, call the phone number on your insurance card to find out:

- If your child is covered
- What services are covered
- Which health care providers you can go to

Be sure to let the health plan know your baby's name and birth date.

If your child is not covered or you have no health insurance, you may be able to get free or reduced-fee health care for your child through state and city programs. You can contact:

- MassHealth (Medicaid) 1-800-841-2900, 1-800-665-9997 (TTY), or www.mass.gov/eohhs
- Children's Medical Security Plan 1-800-909-2677
- The Mayor's Helpline 1-800-847-0710 or www.bphc.org
- Community health centers
- Hospital clinics
- Local boards of health
- If you have problems getting health care for your child or yourself, contact the Health Care for All Helpline at 1-800-272-4232 or www.hcfama.org

In addition, immunizations are provided free of charge at many doctors' offices. For more information call 1-888-658-2850.

For more information about health insurance for your child, see pages 196-197.

At the Hospital

While you are at the hospital, ask the nurses about baby care. They can show you how to bathe and diaper your baby, and help you with breastfeeding. Many new parents do not know what to do. Do not be afraid to ask questions. It will take time for you to get to know your baby. Try to limit visitors, so you can rest and spend time with her.

Your stay in the hospital may be short. By law, you have the right to stay for at least 48 hours after a vaginal birth or 96 hours after a Cesarean delivery. If you decide to go home before that time, you may be eligible for a home visit from a nurse. If you feel that you are being discharged from the hospital too soon, you may file an appeal by calling 1-800-436-7757 or 1-800-439-2370 (TDD/TTY).

Some insurance plans must cover the hospital costs during your 48 hour (or 96 hour) stay. They are:

- Medicaid/MassHealth
- Healthy Start
- Any other state-regulated plan

If you are discharged early, make the first well-child appointment for the first week.

The Premature Baby

If your baby was born 3 or more weeks before your due date, he may need to be cared for in a special nursery. Ask the nurses any questions you have and for help touching and holding your baby.

Talk to your doctor or nurse about how to care for your baby and make sure he is growing okay. If you have any questions or concerns about your baby's development, you and your doctor can call 1-800-905-8437 for the name of an Early Intervention (E.I.) program in your community. The E.I. program can arrange a free screening or evaluation of your baby. For more information, see pages 52-53.

Premature babies may need to be fed more often than other babies. Small babies need extra help to stay warm. Rather than keeping the room warm, use layers of clothes, so that he will not get too warm or too cold. Be sure to wash your hands every time you touch and hold your baby.



Feeding Your Baby

Breastmilk is a perfect food for babies. It has everything your baby needs. It is easier to digest than formula. Your body will make the right amount of milk for your baby. Breastfed babies:

- Tend to have fewer colds, infections, and other illnesses
- Gain weight more quickly in the first three months
- Have less constipation and fewer allergic reactions
- Have a lower risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

Breastfeeding is good for mothers, too. It helps your uterus return to its pre-pregnant size faster. It may also reduce your risk of breast cancer.

You may choose to or need to give your baby formula. There are many reasons why parents use formula. **Make a decision that feels right for you.** You can talk with your doctor or nurse to help you make the best decision for you and your baby.

Babies should have **ONLY** breastmilk or iron-fortified formula until at least four to six months old. You can combine breastfeeding and formula feeding.

Your partner can help with feeding by bringing the baby to you. Your partner can also prepare and give the baby a bottle. A bottle does not have to be formula—it can be breastmilk that you have pumped.

Breastfeeding: Getting Started

For the first 2-3 days, your body makes a special kind of breastmilk called colostrum. Then your regular breastmilk will come in. It may take a while for you and your baby to learn how to breastfeed. Do not get discouraged. There are people to help you: maternity nurses and breastfeeding counselors. Call:

- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program at 1-800-WIC-1007
- Nursing Mothers' Council at 617-244-5102
- La Leche League at 1-800-LA-LECHE

In the Hospital

- Let the nurses know that you are going to breastfeed and would like help getting started.
- Tell the nurses not to give formula or a pacifier to your baby.
- Ask to have your baby stay with you in your hospital room at night or be brought to you when he cries. This way you will know when he is hungry and ready to breastfeed again.

The First Feedings

- Try to nurse your baby within the first hour after birth. If your baby is sleepy or does not want to nurse right away, try again in a little while.
- If you have had a Cesarean, ask the nurses for help with breastfeeding.
- Practice breastfeeding on both sides.
- Remember, breastmilk is the only food your baby needs right now.

How to Breastfeed

Your baby does not need to be on a feeding schedule. Feed her when she is hungry. Stretching, rapid eye movement, and hand-to-mouth movement are all signs of hunger. Do not wait until your baby is crying. She will be frustrated and more difficult to feed.

- Support your breast by placing four fingers under your breast and your thumb on top.
- Hold your baby so her entire body is turned towards you. Support your baby's neck and shoulders in your other hand or crook of your arm. Use pillows to keep the baby at breast height.
- Tickle your baby's lips with your nipple until her mouth opens WIDE.
- Give your baby as much of your breast as possible. Make sure she is grasping more than just your nipple.



- When your baby sucks more slowly or comes off on her own, you can switch sides. To take your baby off the breast, slide one finger into the corner of your baby's mouth and break the suction. Some babies need to be burped before you switch sides.

Breastfeeding Positions



cradle hold



cross cradle hold



football hold



lying down

What to Expect

- When your milk comes in, your breasts will feel full and heavy. Frequent nursing helps keep your breasts from becoming swollen. If you are very uncomfortable, ask a nurse or breastfeeding counselor what to do.
- Breastfed babies often need to be fed every 1–2 hours (8–12 times per day)—this is normal. Offer both breasts at each feeding.
- If your nipples get sore, gently rub a little breastmilk on them. Do not use soaps or creams on your nipples. If you are concerned about the pain, call your doctor, nurse, or breastfeeding counselor.
- At times your baby may want to nurse more often. This could be a growth spurt. Feed her more often for a few days, and your body will make the extra milk she needs.
- If you need to be away from your baby during a feeding, you can pump your breastmilk and someone else can feed her with a bottle. There are two kinds of pumps—hand and electric. Some health plans may pay for a breastpump. For more information on pumping and storing breastmilk, call the Nursing Mothers' Council, WIC, or La-Leche.
- Try to wait 3–4 weeks to introduce your baby to the bottle.
- Talk to your doctor, nurse, or breastfeeding counselor about nicotine and alcohol. They get into breastmilk and may cause problems for your baby. Never use illegal drugs while breastfeeding.
- Check with your doctor or nurse before using any prescription or over-the-counter medications while you are breastfeeding.

Formula Feeding: Getting Started

If you are not breastfeeding, formula is your other choice. Formula is made to have many of the nutrients found in breastmilk. Start by selecting an iron-fortified formula. Formula comes as powder, concentrated liquid, and ready-to-feed. Powder or concentrate are the least expensive. **Prepare formula as it says on the can or bottle.**

When preparing formula:

- Always wash your hands. Clean bottles, nipples, and utensils with hot soapy water. Rinse well before using, or use a dishwasher.
- If tap water is used, run the cold water for 2 minutes and then boil it for 1 minute before using. Once you open and prepare the formula, use it or refrigerate it **immediately**. Use prepared formula within 48 hours.
- Use powdered formula within one month of opening the can. Use concentrate within 48 hours after opening.

If you warm bottles for your baby, do it in a pan of hot water. Always check the formula to make sure it is not too hot. Shake some on your wrist. It should not feel hot. **Do not use a microwave oven.** This may cause serious burns.

Make sure that everybody who gives the baby formula follows these directions.

How to Give a Bottle

Always hold your baby while she is drinking from the bottle.

- Hold her in a comfortable position.
- Tilt the bottle so that the nipple fills with milk.
- Most babies finish a bottle in 15-20 minutes.
- Burp your baby half-way through the feeding and at the end. If she spits up a lot, it may help to burp her more often.
- If the bottle is not finished when your baby is done, throw away the leftover formula. Do not save it for the next feeding.
- Feed your baby as often as she wants. Babies using formula usually eat every 2–4 hours.
- Ask your doctor or nurse if you have questions about nipples, bottles, or feeding.
- Prevent “baby bottle tooth decay.” Do not let your baby sleep with a bottle filled with juice or formula at bedtime or naptime.

It may take a while for breastfed babies to get used to drinking from a bottle.

How to Tell if Your Baby Is Getting Enough Milk

At first, a breastfed baby will only have a few wet or soiled diapers each day. After five days, he should have 6-8 wet diapers a day. He should also have at least 3 bowel movements a day for the first month. Older breastfed babies may have as many as 8 bowel movements a day, or as few as 2-3 a week. Their bowel movements are soft and yellowish.

Formula-fed babies have darker and more formed bowel movements. Your doctor, nurse, or nutritionist will tell you how much formula to give your baby.

If you have any questions or concerns, call your doctor, nurse, nutritionist, or breastfeeding counselor.

Burping Your Baby

Burping makes your baby more comfortable by getting the air out of his stomach. Here are three ways to burp your baby:

- Put his head over your shoulder, and gently rub his back.
- Lay him over your lap, stomach side down, and gently rub his back.
- Sit him on your lap, with your hand supporting his chest and head. Gently rub his back.

It is common for babies to spit up a little milk when being burped. After burping, you can clean your baby's gums with a soft, clean cloth.